

# CHRONOLOGY OF FACTS AND EVENTS

## 1968 First Half-Year

### JANUARY

1 — President Ho Chi Minh's New Year Message made points which ended with this exhortation: "Forward! Our victory is an assurance double sure."

5 — U.S. planes attacked Thanh Hoa and Nam Ha provinces during the New Year "truce."

3 — P.L.A.F. shelled Da Nang airbase for the 6th time since its building; 67 aircraft destroyed or damaged.

— U.S. aircraft raided populated quarters of Hai Phong and Cam Pha and hit the Chinese cargo boat Hong-4138.

6 — Battle fought in Que Son (Quang Nam province); 1,600 puppet troops put out of action.

4 — The Soviet ship *Paruska Zaleski* berthed at Hai Phong struck by American planes; heavy damage.

5 — The 2,700th U.S. plane downed over North Viet Nam.

7 — 7 enemy companies wiped out by the P.L.A.F. in Can Giuoc district, 15 km east of Saigon.

— Operation *Toucheons* foiled by the P.L.A.F. after five engagements; 4,500 enemy troops killed or wounded, 64 tanks and armoured cars destroyed or damaged.

8 — Viet Nam-Cambodia joint communiqué on the D.R.V.N. visit of H.H. Norodom Phibaras, Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia was released.

11 — The 6th B-42 superbombers downed over Vinh Linh (North Viet Nam).

14 — At World Cultural Congress in Havana (Cuba) 500 intellectuals from 70 countries unanimously passed an appeal to world intellectuals calling for support to the Vietnamese people's struggle.

17 — Saigon puppet administration was forced to yield to water and power station workers who had downed tool since January 12. Their strike was backed by 5,000 dockers and 6,000 drivers who also struck.

— The South Viet Nam N.F.L. gave orders to suspend all military attacks on the enemy for 7 days on the occasion of Lunar new year Tet festival (January 30).

18 — N.F.L. Central Trust Bo Committee decided to release two American P.O.W.s: Luis Antonio Ortiz Rivera and Jose Aguirre Santos.

19 — 4th Congress of D.R.V.N. writers and artists met.

21 — Thieu and Ky curtailed their Tet "truce" from 48 to 36 hours.

28 — Saigon puppet administration cancelled the Tet "truce" 45 minutes before its coming into force in the 5 provinces of the First Tactical Zone.

— D.R.V.N. Government issued statement supporting the D.P.R. of Korea Government's call for U.S. spy ship *Pueblo* affair.

30 — At 9 a.m. Thieu and Ky rescinded the Tet "truce" on the whole of South Viet Nam territory.

— South Viet Nam N.F.L. Central Committee gave the P.L.A.F. and South Viet Nam people orders to "March forward and wipe out the aggressors and Thieu-Ky."

— P.L.A.F. generalised attacks and started uprisings of urban and rural population flared up. Communist No 1 of P.L.A.F. Command: from

the night of January 30 to February 1, 64 cities, towns and urban centres, provincial and district capitals (in 32 provinces), 35 key posts and bases and 24 airfields of the enemy attacked or occupied.

31 — The "Alliance of National Forces for Independence and Peace" in Saigon and "Front of Alliance for National Independence, Democracy and Peace" in Hue were set up.

### FEBRUARY

1 — The Presidium of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front met in extraordinary enlarged session to greet South Viet Nam revolutionary forces' victories.

2 — U.S. aircraft raided Hue downtown area.

3 — The South Viet Nam N.F.L. Central Committee hailed the "Alliance of National Forces for Independence and Peace" and the "Front of Alliance for National Independence, Democracy and Peace."

— Phouc Qua, sanctuary of the reactionaries in Hue, stormed; 200 killed, 300 captured including 30 puppet officials.

4 — President Ho Chi Minh sent a message to President Nguyen Huu Tho and the N.F.L. Central Committee: "The early spring victories of the Southern armed forces and people have placed our entire people's resistance against American aggression on a new basis of salvation in a new posture very favourable to us. Nothing can save the American aggressors and their valets from utter collapse."

— For two days running, Da Nang air base was bombarded: 100 planes destroyed.

6 — Special Communist No 2 of the P.L.A.F. Command announced 50,000 enemy troops put out of action including 10,000 G.I.'s (from January 30 to Feb. 4, 1968).

7 — Enemy position at Lang Vay, west of Highway No. 9, taken by the P.L.A.F.; 1,000 enemy troops put out of action.

8 — D.R.V.N. Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh said to AFP correspondent: "Hanoi-Washington Talks will begin as soon as the U.S. has proved that it has really stopped unconditionally the bombing and all other acts of war against the DRVN."

14 — On the occasion of the 7th anniversary of the merging of the P.L.A.F., a message from General Vo Nguyen Giap, D.R.V.N. Defence Minister, to the P.L.A.F. Command reaffirmed the determination of the Viet Nam People's Army to fulfil its task towards the South.

— Revolutionary People's Committee of Thua Thien province, the first revolutionary administrative organ was established at provincial level.

18 — Patriotic elements from puppet Company 630 held meeting at Lo To airfield (Can Tho province) and joined the revolutionary ranks after destroying 35 aircraft.

— The Viet Nam World Peace Committee headed by Dr. D. Berigan and Prof. H. Dean, representing the U.S. National Committee of Mobilization to End the War in Viet Nam, 3 American pilots released by

the Viet Nam People's Army General Political Department.

— At a press conference, Johnson reaffirmed his entire confidence in Westmoreland and promised him new reinforcements.

17 — P.L.A.F. struck at 70 enemy bases in 20 towns and cities.

18 — Between January 30 and February 18, patriotic elements from the puppet army in Tay Ninh province surrendered 34 posts to the revolutionaries.

— The cargo boat loaded with goods collected by French people in the "A shipload for Viet Nam" campaign left for Viet Nam.

21 — Thieu and Ky killed many members of political and religious organisations as well as candidates to the "Presidential election."

24 — 2,000 American citizens demonstrated before the H.Q. of the American delegation to the U.N.O. for an end to the Viet Nam war.

27 — Between January 31 and February 27, Tan Son Nhut airbase came under fire a dozen times; 1,050 American officers and soldiers put out of action, nearly one hundred aircraft and hundreds of thousands of tons of weapons destroyed.

28 — A message of the Budapest Consultative Conference of 67 Communist and Workers' Parties to the C.C. of the Viet Nam Workers' Party and the South Viet Nam N.F.L. Central Committee, voiced total support of Communist and Workers' Parties to the Vietnamese people's struggle against the aggression and for national salvation.

29 — U.S. aircraft hit Co Nhue, in the outskirts of Hanoi: 39 people killed, including 17 children and 6 women, and 12 wounded.

### MARCH

1 — Third anniversary of Indo-Chinese Peoples' Conference (March 1, 1965). Messages were exchanged on this occasion between Ton Duc Thang/President of President of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, Samdech Norodom Sihanouk, President of the Senate, Senate President, and Prince Souphanouvong, President of the C.C. of the Neo Lao Haksat.

2 — Between March 2 and 6 relentless concerted attacks were mounted by the P.L.A.F. against 100 enemy bases, airfields and military depots in 24 towns and provincial capitals.

4 — P.L.A.F. assaulted Da Nang, Nuec Nam chopper parking ground and many district capitals in Quang Nam province: 55 aircraft destroyed or downed, 300 G.I.'s and puppet troops put out of action.

5 — Three puppet companies of Rangers stationed at Nguyen Van Tiep Canal in the Plain of Reeds rebelled and crossed over to the side of the revolutionaries.

7 — A Statement of Warsaw Treaty Countries' Conference supported the Vietnamese people's struggle.

11 — Ending its friendship visit to the D.R.V.N., the delegation of the French Communist Party signed with the Viet Nam Workers' Party a joint communiqué affirming its full support for the 4 points of the D.R.V.N. Government and the Political Programme of the South Viet Nam N.F.L.

— U.S. planes raided a convent

in Phat Diem catholic centre in North Viet Nam, killing 38 people including Reverend Mother Agnes Nguyen Thi Ton.

13 — Phu Long district, 5 km from Phan Thiet town, assaulted and occupied by the P.L.A.F.: one battalion, 2 companies and 6 platoons of the puppet army wiped out, one U.S. battalion, 3 companies and 3 platoons badly mauled.

14 — D.R.V.N. Vice-Premier Le Thanh Nghi handed to the South Viet Nam N.F.L. Central Committee delegate a gift of 50,000 tons of rice, 10 million metres of textile and 10 tons of medicines for the P.L.A.F. and civil population in South Viet Nam.

18 — A meeting was held in Hanoi to mark the 15th anniversary of the nationwide resistance to U.S. imperialism (March 19, 1950) and hail the "International Week of Solidarity with Viet Nam" (March 13-19).

— U.S. planes attacked Nam Dinh cathedral the 2nd time in March, killing vicar general Antoine Le Duc Truong and old priest Tran Kha.

20 — On Highway No. 19, Gia Lai province, the P.L.A.F. destroyed 6 military vehicles, including 11 tanks and armoured cars and about one hundred tons of equipment.

18 — 1,500 people killed by G.I.'s and South Korean troops in Dien Ba and Duy Xuyen districts, Quang Nam province (February 24), and in Son My village, Son Tinh district, Quang Ngai province (South Viet Nam).

17 — The 2,800th American plane downed in North Viet Nam over Hanoi.

— 20,000 British people mostly youths and students staged a demonstration against U.S. aggression in Viet Nam sponsored by the "Viet Nam Solidarity Campaign."

23 — General Westmoreland was relieved of his post as Commander-in-Chief of U.S. forces in South Viet Nam.

25 — Thieu Thien-Hue Revolutionary People's Committee released Mrs. S. Johnson, member of the International Volunteers' Brigade, and Mrs. M. Nelson, physician.

27 — Thieu dismissed 60 heads of province and district.

28 — The first U.S. F-4H swinging fighter-bomber downed in North Viet Nam.

30 — The second F-4H-1A downed in North Viet Nam.

31 — Johnson declared "limited bombing" of North Viet Nam and his withdrawal from the presidential race.

— Nguyen Cao Ky stated, "The Americans are in Viet Nam to defend their interests. The elections here have been a loss of time and money. They are a waste of jobs. We have served to install a regime that has nothing in common with the people — a useless, corrupt regime."

### APRIL

4 — In two successive days, 16 enemy vessels were sunk or damaged in the Mekong Delta.

8 — 800 G.I.'s were killed or wounded in combats West and North-West of Kontum (Western High Plateaux).

— In an interview granted to the C.B.S., the D.R.V.N. Foreign Minister declared: "A D.R.V.N. Government representative at ambassadorial level is ready to contact a representative of the U.S. government in Phnom Penh or in another locality to be agreed upon by both sides."

6 In a P.I.A.F. counter-raid near Ben Tre (Melong Delta), in three days, 510 enemy troops, including 300 G.I.'s, were killed or wounded, 4 vessels sunk, 4 choppers downed and 4 armoured cars destroyed.

8—Premier Phan Van Dong sent a message of condolences to the U.S. Southern Christian Leadership Conference "upon the tragic death of Dr. Martin Luther King."

— An extraordinary session of the Grand Council of the W.F.T.U. was called in Moscow to step up and develop the solidarity movement of world workers and T.U. organisations with the Vietnamese people.

— The Head of State of Cambodia, declared he was prepared to provide all facilities for contacts in Phnom Penh between representatives of the D.R.V.N. and the U.S. governments.

10— In a joint communiqué of the Viet Nam Workers' Party delegation, and the United Socialist Party and G.D.R. Government delegation, the latter stated full support for the correct position and good will attitude of the D.R.V.N. which had been made clear in the April statement of the D.R.V.N. Government.

— The U.S. government contended that Phnom Penh presented technical difficulties for the U.S. resulting from the absence of a U.S. mission and used this as a pretext to reject the Cambodian capital as a meeting place for preliminary contacts between the D.R.V.N. and the U.S.

11 The D.R.V.N. Government suggested Warsaw as site for talks between representatives of the D.R.V.N. and the U.S.

12 The American authorities objected to Warsaw whereas the Polish People's Republic warmly welcomed the D.R.V.N. suggestion.

14 The U.S. aggressors set fire to U Minh jungle (South Viet Nam).

15— Two U.S. "Boeing base" ships of 100 metres and 200 metres long were sunk by the P.I.A.F. in an arm of the Melong river near My Tho, though escorted by about twenty U.S. patrol boats and landing craft: 200 G.I.'s put out of action and 8 artillery pieces destroyed.

— Between January 31 and April 15, 1 million people in town and country rose up against the aggressors and their quislings.

19— Major Operation *Delaviers* in the Highway No 12 area southwest of Hue was launched: 34 U.S. choppers downed, 300 G.I.s killed or wounded. "It is the darkest day of First Air Mobile Division," said the general commanding the operation.

— A statement of the spokesman of the D.R.V.N. Foreign Ministry denounced the dilatory manoeuvres of the U.S. government aimed at slowing new difficulties and prolonging the preliminary contact between the two parties: U.S. President L.B. Johnson put forth new conditions for the choice of the meeting place, while Secretary of State Dean Rusk proposed up to ten new locations.

21 U.S. Yung Tau aircraft, harbour, radar stations and 10 barracks 60 km southeast of Saigon, pounded by 33 planes destroyed and other heavy losses for the enemy.

23 and 24 The Committee for International Relations of the Stockholm Congress on Viet Nam met in ex-

traordinary session attended by delegates from over 40 countries.

27 U.S. national day of protest against Viet Nam war.

28 In elections to provincial people's councils in the D.R.V.N. polling exceeded 95 per cent, 3.5 per cent of returned candidates were women, 27.8 per cent were youths between 18 and 35, 38-47 per cent were national minority people.

30 U.S. raids on North Viet Nam stepped up: 3,500 air sorties in April as against 1,800 in February and 2,500 in January and March 1968.

## MAY

3— The D.R.V.N. Foreign Ministry announced that Minister of State Xuan Thuy had been appointed representative of the D.R.V.N. Government to official talks with a U.S. government representative to ascertain with the U.S. side the unconditional cessation of U.S. bombings and all other acts of war against the D.R.V.N. and then to discuss other problems of interest to both sides, and suggested Paris as site and May 10, 1968 as opening date for the parity.

— Samdech Norodom Sihanouk declared at a reception given in honour of Emperor of Ethiopia Haile Selassie: "To support the Vietnamese patriots is for us a sacred duty."

4 A Luni airfield, 45 km southwest of Hue plastered: 25 helicopters destroyed or damaged.

8— New generalized offensives mounted against 123 enemy military targets including 10 towns and urban centres and about thirty airfields. Viet areas in Saigon 8th and 9th districts for under P.I.A.F. control; a puppet ranger battalion wiped out in the heart of the city; important war materials destroyed.

— Viet Nam Alliance of National, Democratic and Peace Forces met in a Convention to set up the Alliance Central Committee headed by Lawyer Trinh Dinh Thieu. It made public its National Socialist Manifesto. The Hue Front of Alliance for National Independence, Democracy and Peace announced its decision to join the Alliance.

8— The 2,000th U.S. plane downed in North Viet Nam.

— President Ho Chi Minh's message to the President and members of the C.C. of the South Viet Nam N.F.L.

— B-52 super-bombers raided Vinh Linh region (D.R.V.N.) near the provisional demarcation line for three days.

— 11 enemy vessels were sunk or burnt: 600 G.I.s put out of action on Ba Lai river, 60 km south of Saigon.

8 An armoured car parking ground 12 km northwest of Saigon assaulted: 67 cars, 20 lorries, 3 armoured cars, 300 G.I.s put out of action.

13 D.R.V.N.-U.S.A. official talks opened in Paris.

18— 74 people killed or wounded by U.S. bombings in a village in Hung Nguyen district, Nghe An province.

— U.S. camps near Trang Bang, 45 km north-west of Saigon, stormed: 200 armoured vehicles destroyed, 300 G.I.s killed or wounded.

41-week long Operation *Delaviers* ended: 2,200 enemy troops killed or wounded, 200 aircraft destroyed or damaged.

18 Nguyen Van Thieu sacked Nguyen

Van Loc, Saigon premier, and appointed Tran Van Hoang in his place.

18 First Congress of "Anti-U.S. National Alliance" and transport guard workers" was called: 1,850 lorry drivers were selected emulation fighters having safely covered 30,000 kilometres: 6 had hit the record 120,000 mark.

30 In the fourth session of the D.R.V.N. National Assembly (Third Congress), a sharp line was drawn between the people and the government, determination to make every effort to win final victory over the U.S. aggressors, no optimism was the order.

31— Concerted attacks staged by the P.I.A.F. on:

— Camp Evans of First Air Mobile Base: 150 choppers destroyed or damaged.

— Base of U.S. Para Division 101: 300 G.I.'s put out of action, 20 helicopters and 6 cannons destroyed or damaged.

— Don Tso, base of an armoured regiment located 1,000 G.I.s killed or wounded, 100 vehicles destroyed or burnt.

— The Cambodian Royal Government and *Phatet Lao* Press Agency protested against Harrison's proposal to put Cambodia and Laos problems on the agenda of the Paris talks.

22 An 8-day battle took place at Tay Ninh, near Tay Ninh, 90 km northwest of Saigon: 1,200 G.I.s of Infantry Division 25 put out of action.

27— 77 companies including 4 American, wiped out or decimated and 550 G.I.'s put out of action in 4 days at Dong Ha, First Tactical Area in South Viet Nam.

— P.I.A.F. attacks staged in two days running on Gong Trom river, Melong Delta: 90 vessels burnt or sunk, 1,500 G.I.'s put out of action.

30— Phn Cam, biggest U.S. signal centre in South-East Asia (Western sector of Saigon) destroyed in a P.I.A.F. 3-day onslaught.

— Le Duc Tho, special advisor to D.R.V.N. representative to the Paris talks, left Hanoi for France.

31 22 enemy tanks and armoured cars destroyed in Saigon street fighting.

## JUNE

1— In his telegram to Lawyer Nguyen Huu Tho, President of the President of the South Viet Nam N.F.L. Central Committee, Lawyer Trinh Dinh Thieu, President of the Democratic and Peace Forces, said: "The Alliance undertakes to rally the patriotic, democratic and peace forces to co-ordinate action with the South Viet Nam N.F.L. in the common fight for national liberation, independence, democracy and peace."

2 Two puppet battalions composed by 30 armoured cars were routed at Ba Dien a dozen kilometres from Saigon, another puppet battalion was decimated at Hue Lam, western suburb of Saigon.

2 Eleven high-ranking officers of the police and puppet Rangers, all of whom Nguyen Cao Ky's men, were killed or wounded by a U.S. helicopter.

4 Big battles occurred in Saigon: 3 puppet companies of Marines and 300 paratroops and 200 policemen put out of action, 10 choppers downed and 17 armoured cars destroyed.

5 P.I.A.F. Command's Special Communique No 7 gave total of enemy losses from January 31 to May 31: 295,000 enemy troops

including 104,000 G.I.s and foreign mercenaries killed, wounded or captured, 3,450 aircraft, 7,200 vehicles including 4,000 tanks and armoured cars and 470 vessels and craft destroyed or damaged.

6 Committee to Denounce War Crimes of the U.S. Imperialists and Their Valets in South Viet Nam" wiped out the signal centre, mass of toxic gases against the Saigon-Cholon inhabitants.

— A successful P.I.A.F. coup de main was mounted against U.S. logistic base at Vung Ro, 37 km northeast of Saigon: the command of the base and a puppet company wiped out, the signal centre, mass of depots and 106 military vehicles destroyed or damaged.

8 Nguyen Van Thieu appointed his men in the place of Nguyen Cao Ky in the command of the Third and Fourth Tactical Zones, in the command of Saigon Special Zone and as head of the Directorate General of Police.

10— South Viet Nam N.F.L. published a statement refuting U.S. slanderous allegations at the Paris talks regarding South Viet Nam.

— A Neo Lao Haksat Central Committee statement denounced U.S. violations of 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos and dismissed Harrison's charge of "aggression against Laos by North Viet Nam."

— 14 vessels of U.S. Navy sunk or burnt by the P.I.A.F. on the Gong Trom river, an arm of the Melong river.

— To enemy ships and cargo boats set afire on the Saigon river in two days (June 10 and 16).

— The ever heaviest P.I.A.F. bombardments hit military and strategic targets in Saigon: it was P.I.A.F. 60th artillery pounding of enemy positions in Saigon since May 5.

18 Discontented, Nguyen Cao Ky resigned his post as President of the Popular Defence Committee.

18 Nguyen Van Thieu dismissed 8 of the 9 heads of the Saigon police belonging to the Nguyen Cao Ky clique.

17 The P.I.A.F. attacked U.S. encampment in Trang Bang (west of 45 km northwest of Saigon): 300 G.I.s killed or wounded, 35 vehicles (including 30 tanks and armoured cars) and 6 cannons destroyed in 15 minutes.

18 A new P.I.A.F. shelling staged against Camp Evans at Dong Lam, 22 km northwest of Hue: 10 choppers and 200 vehicles destroyed or damaged.

19 In its message to the U.S. National Committee of Mobilization to End the War, the National Committee of South Viet Nam World Peace Committee condemned the American authorities' prosecution of peddler Benjamin Franklin and four other progressive intellectuals.

20 U.S. defense line west of Dak Pei broken: 200 G.I.'s put out of action.

21 An anti-U.S. demonstration was held by Thai students in Bangkok.

25— The 3,000th U.S. plane was grounded in the D.R.V.N.

— Khe Sanh "combat base" evacuated by U.S. troops after 3 months: 15,000 enemy soldiers including 17,000 Americans killed, wounded or captured, 450 aircraft, about one hundred vehicles and 10 artillery pieces put out of action.

28 A South Viet Nam N.F.L. statement reiterated the South Viet Nam people's inalienable right to wash up their struggle against U.S. aggression.

30 U.S. air missions over the D.R.V.N. totalled 3,500 in June.